from the pool via at least one of said selected gaming devices upon the occurrence of a [predetermined] predefined event;

storing the data in a memory connected to a controller associated with only one of the gaming devices;

transmitting data indicative of gaming device activity from the gaming device to the controller;

transmitting a pay command from the controller to the gaming device upon the occurrence of the [predetermined] predefined event; and

paying money from the bonus pool via the gaming device responsive to receipt of the pay command.

2   63. (once amended)   The method of claim 62 wherein the [predetermined] predefined event comprises a [predetermined] predefined transaction at the gaming device.

3   64. (once amended)   The method of claim 63 wherein said [predetermined] predefined transaction comprises making a wager at the gaming device.

4   65. (once amended)   The method of claim 63 wherein said [predetermined] predefined transaction comprises a handle pull at the gaming device.

5   66. (twice amended)   The method of claim 62 wherein providing data establishing [criteria] at least one criterion to cause a bonus to be paid from the pool via at least one of said selected gaming devices upon the occurrence of a [predetermined] predefined event comprises providing data causing money to be paid from the pool via at least one of said selected gaming devices only if [predetermined] predefined minimum gaming device play is achieved.

6   67. (once amended)   The method of claim 62 wherein said [predetermined] predefined event comprises transmission of a pay command from the host computer to the controller.

8   68. (once amended)   A method of operating gaming devices interconnected by a computer network to a host computer comprising:

using the network to detect wagers made at the gaming devices;

allocating a predetermined percentage of the wagers to a bonus pool;

determining the level of the pool;

establishing a predetermined pool level;

establishing a predetermined minimum level of gaming device play;

[detecting wagers made at each of the gaming devices;] and

initiating a bonus period when the pool exceeds the predetermined level during which gaming devices [which] that exceed the minimum level of gaming device play at the start of the bonus period are eligible to be paid a bonus responsive to the occurrence of a predetermined event and gaming devices [which] that do not exceed the minimum level of gaming device play at the start of the bonus period are not eligible for such a bonus.

69. (once amended)   The method of claim 68 wherein [initiating a bonus period] said method further comprises transmitting a command over the network to the gaming devices when the bonus period is initiated.

71. (twice amended)   A method of operating gaming devices configured to play a preselected game interconnected by a computer network to a host computer comprising:

permitting players to play the preselected game at the gaming devices;

paying [to] via each device in accordance with a payout table stored in the device after each game;

monitoring the activity of the gaming devices;

detecting the amount of money played on the gaming devices;

allocating a [predetermined] predefined percentage of the money played to a bonus pool;

determining the level of the bonus pool;

initiating a bonus period after the bonus pool exceeds a [predetermined] predefined level;

permitting continued play of the preselected game at the gaming devices;

continuing to pay [to] via each device in accordance with the payout table after initiating the bonus period; and

paying a bonus [to] via at least one of the gaming devices responsive to the occurrence of a [predetermined] predefined event after initiating the bonus period.

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78. (once amended)   The method of claim 77 wherein said method further comprises:

detecting the amount of money paid as bonuses [on the gaming devices];

modifying the bonus pool by the amount of money paid as bonuses;

determining the level of the bonus pool; and

[deactivating the bonus payout table in the gaming device] ending the bonus period after the bonus pool level falls below a turn-off level.

29 81. (once amended)   The method of claim 77 wherein the [predetermined] predefined event comprises a jackpot paid [at] via at least one of the gaming devices.

30
82. (once amended)   The method of claim 77 wherein the [predetermined] predefined event comprises random selection of one of the gaming devices.

32
83. (once amended)   The method of claim 77 wherein paying a bonus [to] via at least one of the gaming devices comprises paying a bonus [to] via at least one [a] gaming device responsive to a pay command transmitted from the host computer over the network.

33
84. (once amended)   The method of claim 77 wherein said method further includes:

defining at least one bonus eligibility [criteria] criterion; and

paying a bonus only [to] via gaming devices which meet the [criteria] definition.

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85. (twice amended)   The method of claim 84 wherein the [criteria] criterion comprises a minimum level of gaming device play.

35 87. (once amended)   The method of claim 77 wherein said method further comprises:

determining the level of play for a gaming device;

preventing a bonus from being paid [to the gaming device] when the level of play falls below a [predetermined] predefined level.

36 88. (twice amended) A method of operating gaming devices interconnected by a computer network to a host computer having a user-operated input device comprising:

associating each gaming device with a unique address code;

selecting less than all of the gaming devices interconnected by the computer network

responsive to a user-effected action at the input device which identifies the selected gaming devices with the respective associated address codes;

using the network to track activity of the selected gaming devices;

allocating a [predetermined] predefined percentage of the money wagered to a bonus pool;

determining a bonus award to be paid from the bonus pool [at] via at least one of said selected gaming devices;

generating data indicating the amount of the bonus award;

transmitting the data over the network to said one [of said preselected] gaming device[s]; and

paying the bonus award [at] via at least said one gaming device.

36

37 89. (once amended)   The method of claim 88 wherein selecting less than all of the gaming devices interconnected by the computer network responsive to a user-effected action at the input device which identifies the [pre]selected gaming devices with the respective associated address codes comprises creating a table having a list of the unique address codes for each gaming device.

36

39 91. (once amended)   The method of claim 88 wherein using the network to track activity of the [pre]selected gaming devices comprises detecting the amount wagered at each of the [pre]selected gaming devices.

36

40 92. (once amended)   The method of claim 88 wherein selecting less than all of the gaming devices responsive to a user-effected action at the input device comprises selecting a first group of gaming devices and wherein said method further comprises:

selecting a second group of the gaming devices responsive to a user-effected action at the input device which identifies the [pre]selected gaming devices with the respective associated address codes;

generating data indicating that amount of a second bonus award;

transmitting the data over the network to one of said gaming devices in the second group; and

paying the second bonus award [at] via at least said one gaming device in the second group.

43 95. (once amended)   The method of claim 88 wherein paying [at] via at least said one gaming device comprises paying coins from a hopper at said one gaming device.

44 96. (once amended)   The method of claim 36 wherein paying [at] via at least said one gaming device comprises applying credits to a credit meter at said one gaming device.

45 97. (once amended)   The method of claim 36 wherein said method further comprises paying the entire bonus pool [at] via said one gaming device.

7 98. (once amended)   The method of claim 62 wherein said method further includes:

initiating a bonus period after the bonus pool exceeds a [predetermined] predefined level; and

transmitting the pay command only during a bonus period.

46 99. (once amended)   The method of claim 36 wherein said method further includes:

initiating a bonus period after the bonus pool exceeds a [predetermined] predefined level; and

paying the bonus award only during a bonus period.

47 100. (once amended) A method of operating gaming devices interconnected by a computer network to a host computer comprising:

providing data establishing [criteria] at least one criterion to cause a bonus to be paid via at least one of the gaming devices upon the occurrence of a [predetermined] predefined event;

storing the data in a memory connected to a controller associated with only one of the gaming devices;

using the network to track the amount of money played on the gaming devices;

allocating a [predetermined] predefined percentage of the money played to a bonus pool;

transmitting data indicative of gaming device activity from the gaming device to the controller;

initiating a bonus period after the bonus pool exceeds a [predetermined] predefined level;

transmitting a pay command from the controller to the gaming device upon the occurrence of the [predetermined] predefined event; and

paying a bonus via the gaming device responsive to receipt of the pay command.

48 101. (once amended) The method of claim 100 wherein the [predetermined] predefined event comprises a [predetermined] predefined transaction at the gaming device.

49 102. (once amended) The method of claim 101 wherein said [predetermined] predefined transaction comprises making a wager at the gaming device.

50 103. (once amended) The method of claim 101 wherein said [predetermined] predefined transaction comprises a jackpot at the gaming device.

52 104. (once amended) The method of claim 100 wherein providing data establishing [criteria] at least one criterion to cause a bonus to be paid via one of the gaming devices upon the occurrence of a [predetermined] predefined event comprises providing data causing the bonus to be paid only if [predetermined] predefined minimum gaming device activity is achieved.

53 105. (once amended) The method of claim 100 wherein said [predetermined] predefined event comprises transmission of a pay command from the host computer to the controller.

51 106. (once amended) The method of claim 101 wherein said [predetermined] predefined transaction comprises playing a game at the gaming device.

Please add the following new claims:

14--107. (new) The method of claim 74 wherein paying a bonus to a gaming device responsive to a pay command transmitted from the host computer over the network further comprises advancing a credit meter on the gaming device.--

--108. (new)   The method of claim 68 wherein using the network to detect wagers made at the gaming devices comprises transmitting coin-in information from the gaming devices to the host computer.--

--109. (new)   The method of claim 68 wherein establishing a predetermined minimum level of gaming device play comprises establishing a predetermined minimum rate of gaming device play.--

--110. (new)   The method of claim 68 wherein said method further includes a network transmission to the electronic gaming devices when the bonus period is initiated.--

--111. (new)   The method of claim 68 wherein said predetermined event comprises a predetermined number of wagers placed at the gaming devices.--

--112. (new)   The method of claim 111 wherein said predetermined number of wagers is randomly selected.--

--113. (new)   The method of claim 68 wherein said method further comprises paying bonuses to the eligible gaming devices after initiating the bonus period.

--114. (new)   The method of claim 113 wherein said method further includes:
deducting bonuses paid from the bonus pool; and
ending the bonus period when the pool drops below a second predetermined level.

--115. (new)   The method of claim 114 wherein said second predetermined level is substantially the same as the first-mentioned predetermined level.

--116. (new)   The method of claim 113 wherein paying bonuses to the eligible gaming devices after initiating the bonus period comprises paying bonuses to randomly selected gaming devices.

--117. (new)   The method of claim 73 wherein said method further comprises paying a bonus to the selected gaming device.